

12 December 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Historical Staff

SUBJECT: Status Report, W. B. Smith Project

1. I have been at work on this project since about 1 June, but with some time out to participate in Board consideration of NIE 11-8-69 and NIE 11-14-69 and in the coordination of NIE 11-14, with respect to which I had special responsibilities, and also with time out for annual leave in mid-June, late September, and early October.

2. To date I have spent my time on the project in the following ways:

a. Rereading [] history and reading the [] history to refresh my recollection of the problems that confronted General Smith.

b. Determining what primary sources are available in the Agency's archives, for the Smith period and for certain aspects of the pre-Smith period as well. This was surprisingly hard to do. The existence of some sources was denied, presumably for security reasons, until I proved their existence by references to them in other documents. Thus I had to do hard detective work to discover sources that should have been brought to my attention and made immediately available to me, in view of the nature of my assignment. The indexing now being done by the Historical Staff will presumably make such sources more readily discoverable by others in future, but this is being done too late to do me much good.

c. Compiling, from many scattered sources, a Memorandum for Record, dated 19 August 1969, and composed of "Texts Relating to the Conception of National Intelligence Estimates and How They Should be Produced."

This resulted from my own felt need for such a compilation and will be of general historical utility, but it took time.

STAT

d. Composing a Memorandum for Record, dated 1 December 1969, on my own service in intelligence, 1940-1950. This covers matters pertinent to the development of CIA that are not otherwise recorded, gives a better view of such matters than can be found in [] history, and will be an historical document of value in future. It is an historical record that I wished to make in any case, but is germane to the Smith project in that its preparation has renewed and enhanced my appreciation of the main problems confronting General Smith in 1950.

STAT

e. Interviewing Sherman Kent, Lawrence Houston, William Langer (by mail), John Bross, John Earman, [] Sidney Souers, and William Jackson. My recent interviews with Souers, in St. Louis, and Jackson, in Tucson, were especially fruitful, eliciting intimate and valuable information that is not of record anywhere.

STAT

3. The more I consider the pre-Smith period in the light of my own information and that provided by Souers and Jackson, the more inadequate [] account of it appears to me. I conclude that, in order to present adequately the problems confronting General Smith in 1950, I shall have to open with my own summary review of the pre-Smith period. That will take more time than I had at first anticipated.

4. My immediate intentions are, in sequence:

a. To make proper Memoranda for Record out of my rough notes on my interviews with Souers and Jackson.

b. To gain access to and review the pertinent NSC records.

c. To draft the first several chapters of my study, presenting the problems that confronted Smith on taking office and his initial actions regarding them (winning over the IAC and reorganizing CIA).

5. That accomplished, I propose to treat the longer haul topic by topic, discussing only those matters that came to Smith for attention and decision, and leaving the details of implementation to be dealt with in the respective office histories. The final chapter or chapters will deal with Smith's departure (he went unwillingly) and an overall evaluation of his regime from the point of view of 20 years later.

6. I shall make my best endeavor to meet Col. White's August 1970 deadline, but I cannot guarantee to meet it. History is not Current Intelligence; good history cannot be written against a fixed deadline, but only against a target date.

[Redacted Signature Box]

Ludwell L. Montague

STAT